



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY  
OF THE UNITED STATES**

March 14, 2018

Judiciary Committee  
Legislative Office Building, Room 2500  
Hartford, CT 06106  
Phone: 860-240-0530  
judtestimony@cga.ct.gov

Re: **SUPPORT of HB 5469**, AN ACT CONCERNING BEAR HUNTING

Dear Co-Chair Doyle, Co-Chair Kissel, Co-Chair Tong, Vice Chair Winfield, Vice Chair McLachlan, Vice Chair Stafstrom, Ranking Member Rebimbas, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee,

On behalf of the Connecticut-based supporters of The Humane Society of the United States, the largest animal protection organization in the country, please accept this public hearing testimony in **SUPPORT of HB 5469**.

The recent tragic poaching of two beloved Wilton bears highlights the cruelty of trophy hunting. These two bears were beloved by area residents who had appreciated viewing them from a distance.

In September 2017, one of the bears wandered near a tree stand in which 28-year-old Wilton resident, Antonio Lio, had stationed himself. Mr. Lio illegally killed the bear. When the second bear wandered over, Mr. Lio killed him, too. Mr. Lio then texted 33-year-old Norwalk resident, Daniel Moran, to assist with the dismembering of the bodies. They were caught leaving the woods with these bears' head, paws, and skin. Mr. Moran accepted the full penalty, but Mr. Lio fought the charge, ultimately receiving temporary revocation of his hunting license, community service, and accelerated rehabilitation for his heinous crime. Accelerated rehabilitation means that record of his crime will be expunged after a certain period of time.

The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) has made no effort to increase poaching penalties, which are currently unacceptably weak<sup>i</sup>, and instead has been attempting to open a bear trophy hunting season. Connecticut's small bear population needs protection, and this bill is a step in the right direction.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours truly,

**Annie Hornish**

Connecticut Senior State Director  
The Humane Society of the United States  
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<sup>i</sup> Class C misdemeanor (53a-217e) with up to 3 months jail (53a-36) and a fine of up to \$500 (per 53a-42).